

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER.—Now, the Hon. Minister of State for Food and Civil Supplies may make her statement which she wants to make.

Statement by Minister of State for food and civil supplies

re : prices of food grains in the State

ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ ಇ. ಇ. ವಾಜ್ — ಮಾನ್ಯ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರೇ, ನಾನು ಸ್ಟೇಟ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಮಾಡುವ ಮೊದಲು ಈ ಒಂದು ಅಂಶವನ್ನು ತಿಳಿಸುತ್ತೇನೆ. ಶ್ರೀಮಾನ್ ಸಿದ್ದಪ್ಪನವರು ಅರಸೀಕೆರೆ ಗೋಡೌನ್ನಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಹುಳಬಿದ್ದ ಗೋಧಿ ವಿತರಣೆ ಮಾಡುವ ವಿಚಾರ ಹೇಳಿದರು, ಅದನ್ನು ವಿಚಾರ ಮಾಡಿ ತೀವ್ರ ಕ್ರಮ ಕೈಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತೇವೆ ಎಂಬ ಭರವಸೆ ಅವರಿಗೆ ಕೊಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದೇನೆ. Now, I would like to make the following statement :—

The Food policy of the State Government which is in consonance with the food policy of the Government of India aims at the building up of buffer stocks of staple foodgrains with a view to arrest the rise in prices and to make available foodgrains at reasonable prices to consumers, in particular to the vulnerable sections of the society. In pursuance of these two fold objects, Government have embarked on the procurement of foodgrains from the year 1964-65 and have opened fair price shops numbering more than 10,000 throughout the State. The Deputy Commissioners have been instructed to open fair price shops freely wherever necessary, particularly in inaccessible areas.

During the crop year 1971-72, Government decided to procure 1 lakh tonnes of paddy and 30,000 tonnes of jowar. As against these targets 61,000 and odd tonnes of paddy and 2,667 tonnes of jowar have been procured. The procurement operations have not proceeded as expected due to the intervention of the General Elections. The procurement of jowar is too meagre mainly due to the failure of jowar crops in the jowar growing districts.

Informal Rationing system has been continued in the cities of Bangalore and K. G. F., and adhoc distribution system in the remaining parts of the State. Rice, jowar, wheat and sugar are being supplied through fair price shops. The end issue prices of these commodities are as under :—

	Rs.	
Rice Fine	120	per quintal
Rice Midfine	115	do
Rice Medium	109	do
Rice Coarse	103	do
Wheat	88	do
Jowar	75	do
Sugar	205	do

The table given below indicates the prices of commodities mainly consumed by the lower strata of the society as prevailed in the last week of July, 1971 and as on 2-8-1972 :—

		July 1971	3-8-1972
Rice	...	1-33	1-30
Medium	...	1-45	1-50
Jowar	...	0-80	0-80
	...	1-00	1-15
Ragi	...	0-70	0-75
	...	0-85	0-85
Wheat	...	1-00	1-15
	...	1-35	1-25
Bajra	...	0-70	0-88
	...	0-80	0-90
Tur Dhal	...	1-90	1-80
	...	1-95	2-10
Bengal gram	...	1-20	1-35
	...	1-60	1-40
Groundnut Oil	...	4-05	4-40
	...	5-00	4-50
Sugar	...	1-83	3-45
	...	1-95	3-50

A close study of these figures reveals that there has been no abnormal increase in the prices of these commodities except in respect of rice, jowar, bajra and groundnut oil in respect of which the price increase is marginal. However, there is abnormal rise in the open market sugar.

The stocks of rice available at the disposal of the State Government are just sufficient to meet the requirements of public distribution system at the present scale of supply. Anticipating the increased strain on the public distribution system during the lean period, the State Government have approached the Government of India for allotment of 15,000 tonnes of rice from the Central pool. This request is under the active sympathetic consideration of Government of India. In fact, the Government of India have allotted 2,000 tonnes of rice as a first instalment. With the additional stocks received from the Government of India, the State Government propose to pump in more rice through fair price shops so as to neutralise the open market prices. The stocks of jowar are very meagre and efforts made to purchase jowar outside the State have proved futile. In the circumstances, Government are left with no alternative but to have recourse to the supply of wheat to meet the deficit in jowar. In fact, the authorities of the FCI at Bangalore have already agreed to make available any quantity of wheat required for distribution through public distribution system and the Deputy Commissioners of Northern districts where jowar is the main staple food have been directed to ensure that wheat in

(ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ ಇ. ಇ. ಪಾಜ್)

adequate quantities is made available for sale in all the fair price shops under their control. A press Note has been issued informing the consumers of the jowar growing districts of the availability of wheat in adequate quantities in fair price shops for sale at a price of 88p. per Kg. Similarly, the Deputy Commissioners of other Districts have also been instructed to indent for additional supply of wheat, if necessary.

Our State is not self-sufficient in the matter of pulses. Major portion of the requirement in the matter of pulses are met by normal trade channels. The increase in the price of pulses appear to be an all-India phenomena due to the present dry spell. Government have kept a keen watch on the situation and would think of remedial measures at the appropriate time.

The State Government is getting the sugar allotment under the Levy Sugar Supply (Control) Order, 1972 and sugar is being distributed to domestic consumers through fair price shops at a rate of Rs. 2-05 per Kg. The abnormal rise in the open market price of sugar has not at all affected the domestic consumers who get their requirement from fair price shops.

In addition to the measures indicated above the authorities of the Food and Civil Supplies and the Police Department have been instructed to enforce the provisions of the orders made under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 strictly. The police authorities have in particular been instructed to crack down on hoarders, black-marketers and smugglers. In addition, check posts on the borders have also been alerted to be more vigilant against the smuggling of foodgrains outside the State.

12—00 NOON

SRI H. S. SIDDAPPA.—We are glad that the Hon'ble Minister of State for Food is arranging to get lot of rice from the Central Government. I humbly request that the rice should not pass on to the hoarders again but it must reach the consumers.

ಶ್ರೀ ಕೆ. ಎಂ. ನಾಗಣ್ಣ.—ಮಾನ್ಯ ಅರ್ಥಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳು ನಾನು ಹೇಳಿದುದನ್ನು ಅರ್ಥಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡಿಲ್ಲ ಎಂದು ಕಾಣುತ್ತದೆ. ಆಹಾರ ಸರಬರಾಜು ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಏನು ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ ಎಂದು ಕೇಳಲಿಲ್ಲ. ನನ್ನ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆ ಏನೆಂದರೆ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಪೇಟೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ೨ನೇ ಬೆಲೆ ಜಾಸ್ತಿ ಏರುತ್ತಾ ಇರುವುದರಿಂದ ಅದನ್ನು ಕಡಿಮೆ ಮಾಡಲಿಕ್ಕೆ ಏನು ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದೀರಿ ಎಂದು. ಒಂದೆ ಫೇರ್ ಪ್ರೈಸ್ ಪಾಪ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ೧೦ ಜನರು ಇದ್ದ ಸಂಸಾರಕ್ಕೆ ೪೦ ಕೇಜಿ ಅಕ್ಕಿ ಕೊಡುತ್ತಾ ಇದ್ದುದು ಈಗ ೧೦ ಕೆಜಿ ಅಕ್ಕಿ ಕೊಡುವುದಕ್ಕೂ ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲ ಎಂದು ಹೇಳುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಕಾರಣ ಅಕ್ಕಿ ಸಪ್ಲೈ ಆಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ ಎಂದು ಹೇಳುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಇದರಿಂದ ಬಜಾರ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಅಕ್ಕಿ ರೇಟು ಜಾಸ್ತಿ ಆಗುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾರಣವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಅದರಿಂದ ಇದನ್ನು ತಡೆಗಟ್ಟುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಏನಾದರೂ ಸೂಚನೆ ಕೊಡುತ್ತೀರಾ ಎಂದು ಮಾನ್ಯ ಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳನ್ನು ಕೇಳಿದೆ. ಅದನ್ನು ಅವರು ಸರಿಯಾಗಿ ಗಮನಿಸಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಮತ್ತು ಬೆಂಗಳೂರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಆಹಾರ ದಿನವೆ ಬೆಲೆ ಜಾಸ್ತಿಯಾಗುತ್ತಾ

ಇರುವುದನ್ನು ತಡೆಗಟ್ಟಲಿಕ್ಕೆ ಯಾವಾಗ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತೀರಿ ಎಂದು ಕೇಳಿದ್ದಕ್ಕೆ ಅಪ್ರೋಪ್ರಿಯೇಟ್ ಟೈಂ ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ನಾಲ್ಕು ಜನ ಸೀನಿಯರಿಗೆ ಹಾಕಿಕೊಂಡು ಸುಟ್ಟುಕೊಂಡು ಸತ್ತರು. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ನಾನು ಕೇಳುವುದು ಏನೆಂದರೆ ಅಪ್ರೋಪ್ರಿಯೇಟ್ ಟೈಂ ಎಂದರೆ ಯಾವಾಗ ? ಈಗ ಏರಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾ ಇರುವ ಆಹಾರ ದಿನಸಿ ಬೆಲೆಗಳನ್ನು ಇಳಿಸಲಿಕ್ಕೆ ತಕ್ಷಣವಾಗಿ ಏನು ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದೀರಿ ಎನ್ನುವುದನ್ನು ಹೇಳುತ್ತೀರಾ ?

SRI V. N. PATIL.—Has the Government collected information as to how much wheat is required for North Karnataka area where jawar is the staple food and how much quantity has been supplied to the Deputy Commissioner ? What machinery the Government has to distribute wheat through fair price shops, service co-operative shops or Grama Panchayats, and whether it has come to the notice of the Government that jawar is sold in the area at Rs. 1-35 to Rs. 1-55 per kg., and the steps proposed to be taken to provide at least wheat, if not jawar, at 0 88 paise per kg. ?

SRI C. M. ARUMUGAM.—Whether the Hon'ble Minister is aware that the price of essential commodities like rice, ragi, jawar, oil, chillies, sugar and dhal has gone up by 25 to 30 per cent ? Bangalore is an air-conditioned City, and I understand that people from Kashmir have applied for sites in Palace Orchards and Jayamahal extensions. Here, sugar is being sold at Rs. 3-50 per kg. Even the levy sugar and essential commodities are not being distributed properly by the fair price shops to the consumers. Certain officers of the Food Department have managed to remain in Bangalore for more than 10 years, and when they are transferred they go the Ministers and try to remain in Bangalore with the help of black-marketeers. These black-marketeers are protected by the Government.

SRI D. DEVARAJ URS (Chief Minister).—I can assure the hon. member that he can rely on us that we will never protect any black-marketeer under any circumstances however high the influence might be.

SRI C. M. ARUMUGAM.—There is failure of monsoon and the prices have gone up. I want to know whether there is any check on the fair price shops, at least in Bangalore, by the Director the Joint Director and other officers of the Food Department ?

SRI D. DEVARAJ URS.—Sir, in this connection, I wanted to make a statement on the scarcity conditions about what steps Government have taken and what steps we propose to take further. Perhaps, if I speak on that, I think most of the points raised with regard to the food position and other things will also be covered. After the Hon'ble Minister of State for Food replies to the clarifications, if you will kindly permit me I want to make a statement.

SMT. E. E. VAZ.—With regard to the clarification sought for by the hon. member Sri H. S. Siddappa, I wish to state that we shall take every precaution to see that it does not go to the hoarders and that we will be more vigilant.

(Smt. E. E. Vaz)

ಶ್ರೀ ನಾಗಣ್ಣನವರು ಬೆಲೆಗಳನ್ನು ಏಕೆ ಇಳಿಸುವ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನ ಮಾಡಬಾರದು ಎಂದು ಕೇಳಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಸರ್ಕಾರದಿಂದ ಅಕ್ಕಿಯನ್ನು ಕೇಳಿದ್ದಕ್ಕೆ ೨ ಸಾವಿರ ಟನ್ ರಿಲೀಸ್ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ ಮತ್ತು ಇನ್ನೂ ಜಾಸ್ತಿ ಕೊಡುವ ಭರವಸೆ ಕೊಟ್ಟಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಅದು ಬಂದ ಮೇಲೆ We will see that more and more is released to the Fair price Shops. ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ನಗರದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರವಲ್ಲ, ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಎಲ್ಲ ಕಡೆಗೂ ಎಷ್ಟು ಬೇಕೋ ಅಷ್ಟು ಕೊಡುತ್ತೇವೆಂದು ಡಬ್ಬಿಟಿ ಕಮೀಷನ ಗೆ ತಿಳಿಸಿದ್ದೇವೆ.

Sugar is being sold through the Fair Price shops at Rs. 2-05 per kg. In order to keep the sugar prices under check, we are releasing the sugar for domestic purposes through the Fair Price Shops.

SRI C. M. ARUMUGAM.—Why don't you control it?

SRI D. DEVARAJ URS.—Out of the total production, a certain percentage is left to the mill Owners. About 60 per cent is taken to the Government control and sent through the fair price shops. The remaining 40 per cent is given to the mill owners and they are free to sell it in the open market. That is the Government of India Policy.

SMT. E. E. VAZ.—Hon. Member, Sri Patil wanted to know whether Jowar is the staple food of Northern Districts. The jowar collected in the northern districts has been released to those districts. The other districts do not require jowar. In Hubli, we are having 2672 tonnes of jowar in the godowns. We are distributing the jowar to the northern districts as noted below.

Gulbarga	...	698 tonnes,
Raichur	...	95 tonnes,
Bellary	...	358 tonnes.

Besides, we are releasing large quantities of wheat to those districts. I am sure with this assurance, our Hon. Members will be convinced that we are trying our best to bring down the prices. We will make every effort to bring down the prices.

(Madam Speaker in the Chair)

Statement by the Chief Minister :

Re : Scarcity Conditions in Several Parts of the State.

SRI D. DEVARAJ URS (Chief Minister).—I wanted to take this opportunity to make a statement regarding the situation in the state arising out of the failure of rains in many parts of the State. Of course, more than once, the question has been raised on the floor of this House and also on the floor of the Upper House and the Minister concerned—the Revenue Minister, has made statements giving facts and figures and in addition to the statements I have also said certain things. I think I can make use of this opportunity again